



Visitor Programs and Events

Spring 2015

Sandy Hook, New Jersey

The Centennial is Coming

The concept of National Parks originated in the US, and the first national park was Yellowstone, created by Ulysses S. Grant in 1872. The National Park Service as a federal agency was created by an act of congress in 1916, so the launch leading up to the century mark begins. The centennial provides an opportunity to reintroduce the National Park Service to all Americans and expand their understanding of who we are and how we affect their lives.

The NPS will connect with future generations by telling the stories of what we do and how it connects with visitors. Focusing on the future of the NPS and the public we serve honors the success of our past as we continue to protect and preserve for future generations. The contributions of NPS employees, parks and programs will be celebrated to ignite the passion of the NPS in order to carry our stewardship into the next generation. But you should know that the most important part of this celebration is you – our visitor-- and the reason that the NPS exists.

The major Centennial Goal is to connect with and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters and advocates. One of the centennial initiatives is “Find your Park,” so you can connect with, visit and support your local park.

Note that this is “Find *your* Park” not find your *national* park, and *your* park may be an historic site. We want people to connect with their local park, whether city, state, national and get involved.



Find your park and tell us.

Please find your park, and tell us about it by entering the Gateway Photo Contest that will be held this summer. Last year the theme was *tell a story with a picture*, and the photos had to be of Gateway, but this year we are opening the contest to photos of all NYC area parks, whether city, state or national. So the theme for this year will be “*Tell us about your park.*”

We want pictures that show your park in context of its setting and demonstrate, people, nature, communities against the backdrop of NYC metropolitan area.

We will be issuing a special centennial edition of this guide so stay tuned, so you can find out what is happening, and how you can be a part of this celebration. Contest details will be forthcoming. We want every one of you to be a part of the NPS Centennial Celebration.

The Fishermen, Sandy Hook., by Jason Philibotte, placed second in the Gateway 2014 Photo Contest.

The ♥ symbol denotes a hike or walk of moderate activity. Come enjoy nature and the park as you get some exercise.

Do you receive email notifications of Gateway’s programs and events? If you are not on our mailing list and would like to be, please send a message to Charles.Markis@nps.gov, with ‘program guide’ in the subject line and we will add you.

Continuing Programs

Sandy Hook Lighthouse, Keepers Quarters, Visitor Center Daily 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The 1883 Keepers Quarters has exhibits on New Jersey lighthouses and videos. Tours are first-come-first-served starting at 1pm with the last tour at 4:30pm. You must be at least 48 inches tall to climb the tower.

Continuing Programs

Nike Missile Radar Site

Parking Lot L at
Horseshoe Cove

Saturdays, April 11, 18 &
May 30

Sundays, April 26 & May 3, 17
12 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Tour the site where radar once guided nuclear armed Nike missiles during the Cold War era. Veterans of the Nike System serve as tour guides, pointing out and explaining all the radars and controls used to steer the Nike Guided Missiles.

MARCH

American Woodcock – Sights and Sounds

Saturday, March 14

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Spermaceti Cove Parking Lot
(Between LOT D and LOT E)

Join the Monmouth County Audubon Society to listen and look for the aerial courtship displays of the American Woodcock. Bring binoculars and wear comfortable clothes. ♥ 1 mile.

Spring Equinox Walk on Sandy Hook

Guardian Park

Friday, March 20

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Celebrate the equinox with an early evening walk on the Hook. Free, call the American Littoral Society at (732) 291-0055 to make a reservation. ♥ 2 miles.

Battery Gunnison

Saturday, March 21

12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

The Army Ground Forces Association, dressed in 1943 era coast artillery uniform, is a volunteer group restoring and interpreting Battery Gunnison/New Peck and its 6-inch guns. Visitors

are invited to stop by on this work and training day to chat and learn more about the historic time period of March 1943, when work was underway for the conversion of Battery Gunnison/New Peck.

Lighthouse to Lighthouse Tour

Start at Sandy Hook Light;
conclude at Twin Lights
Historic Site

Sunday, March 29

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Park Historians Margaret Carlsen and Thomas Hoffman take a group through the Sandy Hook and Twin Lights lighthouses (respectively) for this special tour. First tour the Sandy Hook Lighthouse then car caravan over to Twin Lights. Reservations required, please call (732) 872-5970.

APRIL

Spring Bird Walk

Spermaceti Cove Parking Lot
(between LOT D and LOT E)

Sunday, April 12

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join the Monmouth County Audubon Society to look for returning osprey, herons, egrets, and other migrants. Bring binoculars and wear comfortable shoes. ♥ 1 mile.

Old Dune Trail Walk

Littoral Society Headquarters,
Building 18

Friday, April 17

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Join us for a walk through the dune trail and maritime, for a chance to view wildlife. Binoculars and cameras are recommended, to view a variety of Sandy Hook's flora and fauna. Free, call (732) 291-0055 to register. ♥ 1 mile.

Arbor Day Tree Walk

Littoral Society Headquarters,
Building #18

Friday, April 24

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Join the naturalists of the American Littoral Society and explore Sandy Hook's unique ecosystem. Bring your binoculars and cameras, to capture the different flora and fauna of Sandy Hook. Great for families. Free, call (732) 291-0055 to make a reservation. ♥ 1 mile.

Surf Fishing Clinic

Littoral Society Headquarters,
Building #18

Saturday, April 25, 8 a.m.

Join the American Littoral Society to learn the basics of casting, knot tying, lure/bait selection, and "reading" a beach. All skill levels will be accommodated. Rods, reels and tackle will be provided. Children under 18 are welcome with a supervising adult. Bring lunch. Call (732) 291-0055 for program fees and to make a reservation.

Battery Gunnison / New Peck Preserved

Saturday, April 25

12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

The Army Ground Forces Association is a volunteer group in 1943 era coast artillery uniform restoring and interpreting Battery Gunnison/New Peck and its 6-inch guns. Visitors are invited to stop by on this work and training day to chat and learn more about the historic time period of April 1943, the preparation for the May 1943 initial activation of Battery Gunnison/New Peck, and the restoration and preservation projects currently underway.

Boy Scout Oceanography Merit Badge Program

NJ Sea Grant

Consortium, Building #22

Saturday, April 25

10:00 am – 2:00pm

Discover the secrets of the ocean and earn this BSA badge by seining in the bay, collecting plankton, studying waves and currents, and participating in interactive laboratory experiments with NJSGC. Open to individual boy scouts. Advance registration required. Call 732-872-1300, ext. 20. Fee.

Clean Ocean Action's Spring Beach Sweep

Meet at LOT D (Seagulls' Nest)

Saturday, April 25

9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Join Clean Ocean Action as we celebrate the Beach Sweeps' 30th Anniversary! The Beach Sweeps is a volunteer clean-up event happening at 70+ locations throughout the state, including Sandy Hook. Come with family members, friends, co-workers, or as an individual and help us keep our beaches clean.

Registration will become active in March. Please pre-register at www.cleanoceanaction.org. ♥ 1 mile.

MAY

Secret Places on Sandy Hook

LOT M Parking Area

Sunday, May 3

2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This program will be both a walking and driving tour. Walk with a park ranger to explore historic rapid fire batteries in Fort Hancock.

Remember to bring insect repellent. Call (732) 872-5970 for details and reservations. ♥ 1 mile.

Horseshoe Crab Walk

Plum Island, LOT B

Tuesday, May 19

6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Get up close and personal with a living fossil. Take an evening walk along Plum Island to look for spawning horseshoe crabs. Wear foot gear that can get wet. Free, call the American Littoral Society to make a reservation (732) 291-0055.

Stars of Sandy Hook- Saturn at Opposition

LOT E (Beach Plaza)

Saturday, May 23

8:30 p.m. – 11 p.m.

Join a park ranger and the Amateur Astronomers Association to view the ringed planet, which will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. This is the best time to view and photograph Saturn and its moons. Dress for the weather and bring telescopes.

Twilight By the Bay

History House Porch, Bldg 1

Saturday, May 30

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Experience Fort Hancock at twilight with a park ranger. Learn about Fort Hancock's significance over the past 250 years. Parking is available behind History House. ♥ 1.5 miles.

COASTAL DEFENSE WEEKEND/OCEAN FUN DAY- MAY 15-17

World War II Harbor Defense Lantern Tour and Battery Gunnison/New Peck

Post Guardhouse
(former Museum)

Friday, May 15

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Volunteer living historians from the Army ground Forces Association (AGFA) will take you for a walk that includes several gun batteries of Fort Hancock, highlighting Battery Gunnison/New Peck. Bring a flashlight and camera, and wear sturdy shoes. ♥1.5 miles.

Battery Gunnison /New Peck Preserved

Battery Gunnison

Sunday, May 17

12 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Volunteers from AGFA in WWII uniform bring the battery to life. as if in May 1943. See fully restored 1920's to 1940's vintage interior electric system. Learn about Fort Hancock, participate in loading the guns, tracking ships, learn artillery math and experience soldier life.

Mortar Battery/ Battery Potter

Sunday, May 17

12 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Batteries will be open with tours provided by park rangers and volunteers.

Ocean Fun Day

New Jersey Sea Grant, Barracks

22 Fort Hancock

Sunday, May 17

11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Spend the day enjoying hands-on fun while learning about our environment. Join NJSGC and their Ocean Fun Days. Learn how to use a seine net or join the youth fishing clinic. Test your boating safety knowledge or become a beach comber and search for natural treasures on a guided tour. Hear from NJ scientists and researchers all about the inner workings of the ocean and how to protect it for generations to come. Dozens of exhibits and children's activities. Free admission.